

OREGON AND WASHINGTON DEPARTMENTS OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

**JOINT STAFF REPORT
WINTER FACT SHEET NO. 8
Columbia River Compact
March 15, 2006**

<i>Fisheries under consideration:</i>	<i>Non-Indian commercial salmon Mainstem commercial smelt Select Areas commercial</i>
--	--

Management guidelines and run forecasts for the 2006 spring season were presented in the Winter Fact Sheet #2 (January 26, 2006)

2006 Commercial Smelt Fisheries

- The Level 1 mainstem Columbia River commercial fishery currently consists of two 9-hour fishing periods per week (7 AM-4 PM Mondays and Thursdays) and is scheduled to continue through March 31.
- Mainstem Columbia River smelt landings total 13,200 pounds through March 14 with no landings reported since February 13.
- Industry has requested modification of the on-going mainstem smelt fishery, by moving the fishing period allowed on Thursdays to Saturdays, in order to avoid conflict with commercial salmon fishing periods.
- The Compact did modify the season for the week of March 6, and the industry has requested the Saturday fishing periods continue (in lieu of Thursday) for remainder of March.

<i>Recommendation</i>	
•	The Joint Staff recommends modifying commercial smelt fishing periods in the mainstem Columbia River as follows:
Season:	Rescind the previously adopted Thursday March 16 fishing period Adopt a fishing period for Saturday March 18. Continue Monday and Thursday fishing periods thereafter through March 31, 2006. Open hours are 7 AM to 4 PM.
Area:	Zones 1-5.
Gear:	Gill net, dip nets, or trawls as per permanent regulations.
Participants:	Columbia River commercial fishers with appropriate licenses and legal gear.
Miscellaneous:	Quick Reporting Rule in effect for Washington buyers.

- The recommendation is consistent with a Level 1 fishery.
- Recreational fishing effort is light in mid-March; conflicts between the fleets should be minimal.

2006 Select Area Commercial Fisheries

- SAFE fisheries have landed an estimated 60 Chinook and three sturgeon through March 13. All landings are from Youngs Bay, except four Chinook (no upriver) were landed in the most recent Blind Slough period.
- Through March 13, the estimated upriver spring Chinook impacts for Select Area winter fisheries is 0.002%, or 2% of the 0.100% allocated to Select Areas.

- The Youngs Bay winter season is scheduled to continue with nine additional fishing periods limited by time and area. No additional winter season fishing periods are currently adopted for Blind Slough or Deep River.
- The majority of any upriver impacts for Select Areas fisheries are expected to occur in spring seasons set to open the third week in April.
- In the Blind Slough area, compact action is required in concurrent jurisdiction waters which extend downstream from the Railroad Bridge. Oregon State action is required for Oregon State waters which in Blind Slough extend upstream of the Railroad Bridge and in Youngs Bay are all waters.

<i>Recommendation</i>	
The Joint Staff is recommending the following additional fishing periods for the Blind Slough Winter Season:	
Winter Season:	7 PM Sunday March 19 to 7 AM Monday March 20 (12 hours). 7 PM Wednesday March 22 to 7 AM Thursday March 23 (12 hours).
Area:	Blind Slough area only.
Gear:	A 7-inch minimum mesh size restriction. Nets restricted to 100 fathoms in length with no weight restriction on leadline. Use of additional weights or anchors attached directly to the leadline is allowed.
Allowable Sales:	Salmon, sturgeon, and shad. A maximum of 3 green or white sturgeon in the aggregate may be possessed or sold by each participating vessel during each calendar week (Sunday through Saturday) of the open fishing periods. The three sturgeon possession and sales limit includes all Select Area fisheries.
Miscellaneous Regulations:	Special transportation permits are not required to take fish outside the fishing area. Permanent transportation regulations will be in effect.

<i>Recommendation</i>	
The Joint Staff is recommending the following area modification for the following previously adopted Youngs Bay fishing period:	
Winter Season:	6 AM to 10 AM Thursday March 16 (4 hours)
Area:	Youngs Bay fishing area with upper boundary at the confluence of the Youngs and Klaskanine rivers.

- Provide additional fishing opportunity and area to harvest spring Chinook with minimal impacts to upriver stocks.
- Wednesday and Sunday night fishing periods in Blind Slough minimizes overlap of mainstem and Youngs Bay fishing periods.

2006 Commercial Salmon Fisheries

Chinook and Steelhead During 2006 Winter Fishery										
Fishing Period	Gear	Del	Chinook Kept			Chinook Released			Sthd Handle	White Sturgeon
			Total Kept	Upriver Stock	L River Stock	Total Rel	Upriver Stock	L River Stock	Wild Winter	
Sturgeon Season	9"	74	39	0	39	5	0	5	0	288
Feb 23-24 (24 hr) + Mar 2-3 (24 hr)	8"	86	239	21	218	10	4	10	14	36
Mar 7-8 (24 hr) + Mar 9-10 (18 hrs)	8"	124	363	71	292	52	27	25	17	20
Mar 14-15 (18 hr)	8"	83	384	114	270	107	69	38	21	11
Total		367	1,025	206	819	178	100	78	52	355

- Non-Indian upriver spring Chinook mainstem impacts to date are estimated to be 0.135%, or 24.8% of the 0.545% mainstem commercial impact guideline. Impacts to wild winter steelhead are 0.097%, or 4.9% of the 2.00% limit.
- Harvest rate on Willamette hatchery spring Chinook total 22% of the 2,500 fish available
- Combined upriver spring Chinook impacts total 0.137%, or 21.2% of the 0.645% allocated to commercial fisheries.

2006 Spring Chinook Commercial Fishery -- Preliminary Observation Data																							
Fishery	Date	Mesh Size (Inches)	# Drifts	Lower R.			Upriver			No VSI			Total Chinook	Ratio			Total Steelhead	Steelhead				Upriver Chinook	Marked Chinook
				Clipped	No Clip	Unk	Clipped	No Clip	Unk	Clipped	No Clip	Unk		Chinook/Drift	Sthd/Drift	Chinook /Sthd		Clipped	No Clip	Unk	DNA count		
Full Fleet Test	Feb 23-24 Feb 28-29	≥8 4¼	25 13	1 4	0 0	0 0	0 2	0 0	0 0	1 0	0 0	2 6	0.1 0.5	0.1 0.9	1.0 0.5	2 12	1 6	1 6	0 0	1 6	0% 33%	100% 100%	
Full Fleet Test	Mar 2-3 Mar 5	≥8 4¼	43 14	13 5	1 1	1 0	0 0	1 0	0 0	1 0	0 0	17 7	0.4 0.5	0.0 0.4	17.0 1.4	1 5	1 3	0 2	0 0	1 1	6% 14%	94% 86%	
Full Fleet	Mar 7-8	≥8	36	2	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	6	0.2	0.1	3.0	2	1	1	0	1	50%	67%	
Full Fleet Test	Mar 9-10 Mar 12	≥8 4¼	33 12	16 2	0 4	0 0	1 2	0 0	0 0	0 0	1 0	18 8	0.5 0.7	0.0 1.3	18.0 0.5	1 15	1 8	0 7	0 0	0 6	6% 25%	94% 50%	
Full Fleet	14-Mar	≥8	35	11	4	0	6	1	0	1	0	23	0.7	0.1	5.8	4	3	1	0	1	32%	78%	

Recommendation	
Season:	The staff is not recommending a fishing period at this time. Test fishing will be conducted on Sunday March 19, 2006

- Upriver salmon comprised about 37% of the landings for the most recent fishery.
- Additional fishing periods with large mesh could bring upriver impacts up to 50% of the impacts, with less than 2000 salmon landed.
- Steelhead are abundant in the river, making small mesh gear unfavorable at this time.

FUTURE MEETINGS

- The Joint Staff is recommending a Compact hearing be scheduled for 2:00 PM Monday March 20 via teleconference to discuss additional salmon fishing periods.